



The Bethel Courier.

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Bethel Historical Society



Dr. William B. Lapham (1828-1894)

SOCIETY TO REPRINT LAPHAM'S HISTORY OF BETHEL

Last month the Society announced the reprinting of William B. Lapham's *History of Bethel 1768-1890* by New England History Press of Somersworth, New Hampshire. The new printing will reproduce the nearly seven hundred pages of the original book plus over sixty photographs and maps. In addition, new genealogical and general indexes have been prepared which will make the book easier to use. The work will also feature an introductory essay discussing the author and providing some perspective on the history of Bethel since it was first published in 1891.

Long out of print and generally unavailable, the history is filled with information on Bethel's early days and contain a large genealogical section. Occasional copies appearing at auctions have brought prices over \$200 and the book is eagerly sought by collectors and dealers as being among the best of Lapham's works.

The new edition will feature a hard cover and become available in the fall of 1981. Since there will be only five hundred copies printed it would be wise to order one as soon as possible and take advantage of the pre-publication price of \$35 plus \$1.75 Maine sales tax for residents of the State of Maine. After publication the price will rise to \$45. Those wishing their copies mailed should include \$1.75 per book for postage and handling. Orders should be directed to the Society, P.O. Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217.

DR. MOSES MASON AND THE ANDROSCOGGIN CANAL AND MILL CORPORATION

Americans were canal enthusiasts in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Internal improvements were very much in vogue; roads and canals were especially necessary if a young nation was to develop.

An ambitious project during this period was the building of the Erie Canal, completed after seven years of work in 1825. This project inspired interest in the building of a canal in Maine from Harrison to Portland. It had been proposed as early as 1791 but it was not until 1821 that substantive steps were taken to undertake its construction. The canal was planned by the man who had directed the Erie Canal and cost \$206,000 to build. To assist in raising money, a lottery and a bank (Canal National) were set up. By 1830, it was completed.

All of this apparently had its effect on Dr. Moses Mason of Bethel. In 1836 he and others successfully petitioned the Maine Legislature to establish the Androscoggin Canal and Mill Corporation which received permission to divert the waters of the Androscoggin at Bethel through Pleasant River to Songo Pond and then down Crooked River to the Canal. Its purpose was to open the western interior of Maine and make it accessible to the Portland market.

Mason had a powerful ally in these plans in his friend F.O.J. Smith of Portland who served in Congress with him and was a leading canal proponent. In 1835, the year before the corporation was approved, Dr. Mason and Smith had begun the planning of this extension of the Cumberland and Oxford Canal. They were assisted in this venture by financing from Boston interests and with this support began acquiring the necessary land for the canal and mill sites. But more money was needed if the project was to go forward.

In 1838, the Cumberland and Oxford Canal directors promised the Androscoggin Canal and Mill Corporation one third of the toll revenue for twenty years. But this implied construction. Stock subscriptions were sought but interest was not great. A lottery was proposed but the one for the Cumberland and Oxford Canal was being investigated at the same time, so that possibility was not feasible. Smith sought support from Portland businessmen, attempting to gain their attention by showing that wood from the interior could come to Portland instead of going down the Androscoggin to Brunswick, but the reaction was lukewarm.

The project seemed to go nowhere not from any lack of effort by Smith, Dr. Mason and friends. By the 1840's railroad surveys were being made between Portland and Montreal paving the way for the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railway which effectively killed any further interest in canals.

NEW ENGLAND'S LAST INDIAN RAID

By Randall H. Bennett

This article appeared in the Summer of 1978 issue of The New England Galaxy and is reprinted here by permission from Old Sturbridge Village.

Perhaps no other element of the American literary genre so invokes the interest of New England historians as the "Captivity Narrative", a product of the unrelenting attacks upon frontier settlements in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Narratives describing assaults on several Connecticut River towns beginning in the 1670's are legion. During the bloody Indian Wars no town was safe; even early-settled coastal communities all along the eastern seaboard suffered the ravages of fire and destruction. The rugged souls who survived often faced the prospect of a torturous march north to Canada.

Amongst these choice bits of frontier literature, one in particular, published a half-century after American Independence was declared, recounts a significant period of alarm within the shadows of the "Crystal Hills" of northern New Hampshire and western Maine. This attack, traditionally considered the last Indian Raid in New England, has borne the brunt of both exaggeration and neglect. The present article offers a reappraisal of that event based on the first examination of heretofore untapped sources in conjunction with known references.

In the near two hundred years since the "Massacre" of August 1781, the center of research and commemorative efforts, if one exists, has been Bethel, Maine, a rural outpost lying on both sides of the Androscoggin River in the hills of northern Oxford County. Mainly because of the antiquarian labors of Dr. Nathaniel Tuckerman True, preceptor of the academy at Bethel Hill, author of the town's first history, and an enthusiast for everything from farmers' clubs to the Abenaki Indian language, does there exist today a rare consciousness concerning the local past. This awareness spans an important era for the town's some 2,500 citizens: from the "Antiquarian Suppers" begun by True in 1855, to recent nomination of the Broad Street Historic District with its graceful Federal, Greek Revival, and Queen-Anne style structures fronting both sides of a long, tree-lined avenue.

Bethelites are all too familiar with the date of the Indian foray, and it is not unusual to hear an event mentioned as being so many years before or after the attack. Every local and county history of the region makes mention of it. Yet, while extensive documentation exists, no one has placed the event, one which may give Bethel the honor of being the town farthest inland in Maine to be attacked during the Revolution, in a proper perspective.

To understand the reasons behind the Raid, we must review the jurisdiction over that corner of the "District of Maine" as it was set off from Massachusetts in 1778. The Anasagunticook and Peqwawket Indians inhabited western Maine from Fryeburg, where there was a large encampment, to the Canadian border. But when the power of the Peqwawkets was broken by John Lovewell in 1725, and the Anasagunticooks feared a like fate, these tribes left their Saco and Androscoggin Valley homes and traveled north.

The French held possession of territory bordering the St. Lawrence from the early seventeenth century, and it was at Quebec and Montreal that raids upon the Maine settlers were planned. In 1749 a treaty was signed at Falmouth by representatives of both Massachusetts Bay and the Indians. Nevertheless, these

several tribes, incited by the French, continued to harass English settlements. Attacks were made at New Meadows, North Yarmouth, and New Gloucester in 1750. Nine years later a counter-attack was made on the village of St. Francis by Rogers' Rangers which nearly annihilated the St. Francis tribe.

The Indians of the Androscoggin Valley, at least those who remained to live out their lives under English dominance, had set a claim to portions of southwestern Maine in a deed of 1684 (the Pejepscot Purchase) which conveyed to Richard Wharton, a merchant of Boston, "all the land from the falls at Pejepscot, and Merrymeeting Bay to Kennebec, and toward the Wilderness, to be bounded by a southwest-northeasterly line, to extend from the Androscoggin upper-most falls . . ." The implication was to set a boundary at the "Great Falls," at present-day Rumford; tensions over this disputed claim would have an effect on matters a hundred years later.

The fall of Quebec in 1759 signaled an honest attempt on the part of the English colonists to settle the interior of Maine. Moreover, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, having an abundance of land and little money, made immediate grants in the "District," one of which, to the descendants of Sudbury men for their services in the Canada Expedition of 1690, came to rest on the upper Androscoggin as "Sudbury Canada" and renamed as Bethel in 1796. By the 1770's Bethel was one of four towns that had been "opened for improvement" above Rumford Falls.

Rapid settlement of the "second tier" of townships, including Sudbury Canada, before the end of the Revolutionary War, testifies to the state of security inland. In contrast to coastal activities—a naval engagement at Machias and the burning of Falmouth (Portland) in 1775, and the occupation of Castine and other coastal towns by 1779, the backwoods of Maine was relatively quiet.

Any interpretation of the Raid of 1781 must lean heavily on the only known contemporary account to find its way into publications: *A Brief Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Lt. Nathaniel Segar* (Paris Hill, 1825). Few copies of the pamphlet survived the nineteenth century, and the item was considered scarce by 1890.

Leaving Newton, Massachusetts, in 1774, where "the luxuries and comforts of life were in abundance," Nathaniel Segar staked out the first homestead in Sudbury Canada but soon after returned to enlist in the Continental Army, serving at Cambridge, Bunker Hill, Crown Point, and Bennington. After a total of two years and nine months of service, he and other Newton men made the trek to Maine "with kettles for making sugar," intending to establish a permanent township.

At the time of the Raid but ten families and four single men had followed the spotted trail over the "burnt lands" to make their homes in Sudbury Canada. Eleazer Twitchell of Dublin, New Hampshire, had erected a grist mill and employed several of the men in cutting tall pine destined for Brunswick.

Of the few Indians who roamed the Valley, Segar wrote:

They employed themselves in hunting; and we could barter with them for corn and sugar . . . for which we received wild meat, tallow, and fur; and there being but very few families in this place, it was for our interest and safety to cultivate peace and a good understanding with the savages of the wilderness.

According to the *Segar Narrative*, the major points of which are now complemented by a manuscript written about 1820 and recently uncovered at the Maine Historical Society, a band of six Indians, "painted and armed with guns, tomahawks and scalping knives" and led by one Tomhegan, "a bold, impudent

fellow," arrived on August 3, 1781, at a clearing where Segar and others were busy with the harvest, and quickly made them prisoners. On a site near the River stood a rude plank house built two years earlier by Lt. Jonathan Clark, who, with Segar and Twitchell, was one of the three captured. Here they were bound tightly and the house plundered of several gallons of rum and some sixteen dollars.

Collected versions of the story agree on several facets in the next stage of the attack—the boldness of Mrs. Jonathan Clark, who, before making good her escape that evening, hid her husband's silver watch in the ashes and, when approached for her necklace, broke its string, scattering the beads over the floor; the capture of Benjamin Clark as he neared the settlement; Eleazer Twitchell's flight to safety and his concealment in the undergrowth near Clark's home.

Succeeding generations naturally seized upon the opportunity to exaggerate and dramatize. Many are the details that cannot be verified. A voluminous history of the State, published in 1832, speaks of the Raid as the scene of incredible barbarities—houses burned, settlers murdered, and their belongings either plundered or destroyed. One account goes so far as to describe a bloody affair wherein "cannibal Iroquois" made short work of the inhabitants. Not surprisingly, the actual attack has been placed loosely within the confines of the Valley, though general consensus gives Bethel as the locale.

Conveying his feelings as he recalled the dismal march along the River the night of the 3rd of August, Segar remarked:

I had often heard of people being taken captive by the Indians, and I now found myself in this dreadful situation, not knowing what evils would befall us, and whether we would ever see our friends again, whom we were now leaving in anxiety, uncertainty and distress.

After a sleepless night spent at the deserted camp of one Peter Austin, the three men and their captors entered Peabody's Patent, now Gilead. Here the Valley narrowed and the precipitous sides of tall mountains crowded in on the farm of the tract's only settler, James Pettengill. Searching his house, and finding a tub of cream and some sugar, the Indians "fell to eating like hogs." Though those within the house received no abuse, Pettengill died.

After a short stay here, the Indians told Mr. Pettengill, that he must go with them to Canada. — He told them he had no shoes. They searched the house, but they found none. They then told him, that he might tarry at home, but charged him not to leave the house . . . We then went on, I should suppose, a mile or more, and we were ordered to stop. Two of the Indians went back, and soon returned, and Mr. Pettengill with them; we travelled some distance together . . . On a sudden, Mr. Pettengill was missing. I thought they had sent him back; but they had killed him about a mile from his house . . . Some days after, his wife discovered his dead body in the bushes, where they had left it.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Although much of our present attention is directed toward the Indian Raid Bicentennial and the long-awaited reprinting of Lapham's *History of Bethel*, another important historical society project continues to be the building of an endowment beyond that provided by the Bingham trustees.

During the past few years this fund has grown to over \$3000 through the generosity of members and friends. I would like to encourage those interested in the future of the Society and the Moses Mason Museum to make a gift to this endowment fund. This fund differs from annual membership dues in that it is, of course, voluntary and does not go to meet current operating expenses. It is invested in high yield certificates of deposit so as to better insure a healthy financial future for the Society.

Gifts to the endowment fund may be made in honor of a special event or in memory of a loved one. Director Stanley Howe is always willing to provide further information to anyone regarding gifts to the Society.

In closing, I urge all our members and friends to visit the museum this summer, and especially to participate in the exciting events planned for the Indian Raid Bicentennial, August 1-2.

Catherine S-C Newell

Pettengill's remains were interred several days later by Joseph Greely Swan and others from Sudbury Canada. Examination of the corpse revealed that the Indians had been quite thorough—the scalp was missing.

In addition to Segar's account, data on the role played by Shelburne, New Hampshire, exists at the New Hampshire State Historical Society both in manuscript and in published histories, the most reliable of which is Willey's *Incidents in White Mountain History* (1856).

Soon after crossing the present line between the two states, the party of Indians and their captives encountered two of the Messer children at play. Upon asking the number of men in the next house, the Red Men were given to believe there were ten, though there were not ten in the whole settlement. When asked how many were armed, the frightened children again said ten. This misinformation so terrified the Indians that they threw off their packs, placed them on the backs of the three prisoners, and made a quick line to the River. Segar wrote:

We arrived through the goodness of God, safe to the other shore; but I know not how; for people tell me that it was never forded before or since that time, at that place.

EDITOR'S CORNER

This will be the first summer since I became Director of the Society that I will not meet Ruth Crosby at the post office or on the street while she was on one of her weekly errands in Bethel. Often I would see her and we would discuss the latest news from mutual friends in Orono. She embodied in so many ways the genteel tradition of another era and I never saw her but my thoughts turned to her delightful book *I Was A Summer Boarder* which I had read so often and which filled me with so many nostalgic impressions of Bethel at the turn of the century. I shall certainly miss my visits with her, but her life and writing should serve as an inspiration for all of us in the field of local history.

Before long another homestead, belonging to Hopestill Austin, was ransacked. While Mrs. Austin was being robbed of her earrings and finally managed to wrench her wedding ring free under threat of losing her finger, two of the Indians looted the house, taking a feather mattress outside and tearing it to shreds. The helpless family watched in terror as their ox was led to the front yard, slaughtered, and then roasted. By some good fortune, Mr. Austin had been upriver during the entire incident.

Having satisfied their cupidity, the Indians directed the captives in a westerly course. It was mid afternoon.

After resuming our march, Tomhegan took his gun and went from us . . . and soon came back with a colored man, named Plato. He said there were two men in a house nearby, besides the one Tomhegan had shot. A Mr. Peter Poor and Plato had gone to work again after dinner. As soon as they neared Tomhegan, Poor turned to run and he instantly shot him, and he died immediately.

With Plato now a captive, the Indians allowed Lt. Jonathan Clark to return to Sudbury Canada, warning him to keep to the road. But he wisely crept back through the dense woods, having first crossed the Androscoggin. This action undoubtedly saved his life, for two Indians following at some distance would assuredly have shot him as a deserter.

The line between established towns and the unbroken wilderness that extended to Canada was marked by the northernmost house in Shelburne, that of a Capt. Rindge. Characterized in the *Narrative* as being "amazingly alarmed," Rindge, at the approach of the renegades, offered them many of his goods in hope of distracting them. Despite his pleas of loyalty to the King, he was forced aside as the house was looted. According to Segar:

They made a prisoner of Elijah Ingalls. He was only a boy; but Captain Rindge so far prevailed with the Indians, in his behalf, that they dismissed him.

For the rest of the journey, which ended two weeks later with their arrival at the St. Lawrence, the captives experienced near starvation and the ever-present threat of sudden death. Their route extended into the range of mountains now known as the Mahoosucs, lying north of Shelburne. We may assume, from Segar's "height of land between the Androscoggin and Umbagog Lake," that this was the vicinity of Old Speck, third highest mountain in Maine. Here Segar, under threat of death, left a note on a strip of spruce bark, warning any with thoughts of rescue to turn back.

In the last few pages of the *Narrative*, the researcher becomes absorbed in the details of the march—the three scalps (those of Pettengill, Poor, and another man overtaken before the attack at Sudbury Canada) and how they were revealed to the captives; the trip by canoe across Umbagog Lake and thence up the Magalloway River; the boiled moose-meat which revolted the prisoners and the roasted moccasins of moose-hide which tasted little better; the voyage down the St. Francis River; and finally temporary relief at the end of the brutal trip.

While the Negro Plato was sold to a Frenchman and later managed to return to Shelburne where he spent the remainder of his life, Benjamin Clark and Nathaniel Segar were eventually escorted up the St. Lawrence to Montreal, where they remained for forty days before a final move upriver to an island prison. Here they languished under discouraging conditions:

We had been so worn down with hunger and a fatiguing journey through the wilderness, and distressing fears in our minds,

that we were almost ready to despond. Our allowance was not half sufficient for us. In this place were multitudes of rats, which would devour the whole allowance that was granted us, and was of itself too small for us; but we took every measure to secure it from the rats. The lice, which we caught of the Indians, were a great annoyance to our bodies. We were, therefore, afflicted on every side.

As "rebels" (the term by which the British designated captured Americans, thus avoiding formal recognition of the colonial forces), Clark and Segar were to suffer some sixteen months' imprisonment. The fact that they had been captured as civilians was indeed a sad note, for they both knew that Congress in 1779 had established a policy of not allowing the exchange of British military prisoners for captured American civilians. To Segar imprisonment was even more ironic, since he had lived through so many conflicts during his service without being taken captive.

After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown in October 1781, a general exchange of prisoners began. Finally, on the tenth of November 1782, having landed at Quebec a few days before, Segar and Clark embarked on a ship for Boston.

Though the Raid of 1781 cannot be claimed as a major assault, yet it seems to have had a pronounced effect on the Valley of the Androscoggin and its inhabitants. In Sunday River Plantation, the home of Benjamin Barker had been pillaged the day before the attack. In Sudbury Canada, the David Marshall family, upon hearing there might be hundreds of Indians about to enter the settlement, left for Hebron, never to return; the Abraham Russell family escaped with its horse and "two-pailed kettle" to Fryeburg, and there remained until confidence had been restored. Downriver at Rumford, then New Pennycook, Jonathan Keyes, his wife and children left for the relative safety of New Gloucester but returned in 1783.

Soon after the news spread, a rescue party of some thirty men from Fryeburg, under the command of Captain Stephen Farrington, made its way north over the trail through Lovell, Waterford, and Albany with the Indian Sabattis as guide. Only after strong persuasion by Jonathan Clark, who had safely reappeared at his home, did they consider pursuit useless and return.

The night following the Raid at Shelburne, the few families there, after killing their dogs lest they give them away, banded together on a high point of land behind the Austin cabin and there spent the night. At dawn of the next day they collected their few belongings and made the fifty-nine-mile trudge to Fryeburg. Since that time, the rise upon which they listened through the darkness for the sound of footsteps has been appropriately called "Hark Hill."

To guard against further attack, the people of Sudbury Canada erected two stockades of hewn timbers in the southern and eastern parts of the township and applied to Massachusetts for soldiers to garrison them. The records of 1784 indicate expenses for two-months' service for many of the men who stayed. Even more interesting is the claim for \$300 made by Segar and Clark after their eventual return from Newton. Segar later recalled how the inhabitants would come to the forts at night and how the soldiers drilled on a plank bridge near Twitchell's mill, for want of a cleared spot level enough.

It still remains to understand the reasons behind the Raid. Dr. N. T. True gave as a prime reason the eight-dollar bounty paid by British officers for each captive, or for each scalp. Recalling the continual dispute over Indian territory in the Bethel



Scene from 1931 Indian Raid Celebration — Settler's Cabin

region, one cannot help but feel that the whole encounter, so unlike other Revolutionary occurrences in Maine, represented a final, though obviously futile, effort on the part of the Indians against further encroachment on ancient tribal lands. Certainly, as victims of circumstance, the settlers suffered greatly, but who can say that the attacks were wholly unwarranted? The Jonathan Clark farm, thirty years before the Raid, was still being used as an Indian burial ground.

The death of Gilead's first settler, sad as it was, made its point to future inhabitants perhaps better than any verbal gesture could have. Furthermore, Peter Poor has the dubious honor of being the last white man killed by Indians in New Hampshire as well as in the entire Androscoggin Valley.

At the Centennial of 1881, a lengthy discourse highlighting the known facts of the Raid was delivered, yet a replica of the stockade was burned in a reenactment! By 1931, not only did it seem historically accurate to burn buildings, but the Clark house, the original of which was destroyed in 1785, was promoted through maps and photographs as being a quarter-mile from the River.

As the Bicentennial of the "Last Indian Raid" draws near, it might be well for its celebrants to review the context in which it occurred. Only then will it become representative of an important turning point in New England history.

IN MEMORIAM

Died in Bangor, Maine, April 1, 1981, Ruth Crosby, life member of the Society. Miss Crosby, Professor of Emerita of English at the University of Maine at Orono, was the author of I Was A Summer Boarder and other books. She spent her summers at the Red House, Sunday River.

Died in Rahway, New Jersey, Phyllis Crosby Williamson, April 29, 1981, longtime member of the Society and a generous donor. Mrs. Williamson was the sister of Ruth Crosby and also spent her summers at Sunday River.

ART SHOW AND BIRTHDAY PARTY ATTRACT OVER TWO HUNDRED

The second annual Faye S. Taylor Memorial Art Show was held on May 23 with nearly three hundred student and adult entries exhibited in the Moses Mason Museum meeting room, gift shop and mud room. The show is held each year and honors the late Faye Sanborn Taylor who was not only an artist but also interested in the promotion of art, especially among the young. Mrs. Taylor was also a charter member of the Society and its treasurer until her death.

In Grades 1-6, first prize was awarded to Michele Johnson (Grade 5), second prize to Marlies Ouwinga (Grade 3) and third prize to Randy Coulombe (Grade 4). In Grades 7-12, Sarah Jenkins (Grade 10) was awarded first prize, Brent Bachelor (Grade 8) second prize, Missy Weston (Grade 11), third prize. Judges for the students was James B. Owen, F. Barron Freeman and Audrey Taylor. Prizes consisted of cash awards.

In the adult competition for the Faye Taylor Memorial Landscape Award, Donald G. Bennett's "Mayville Meadow" was chosen by judges Sue Farrar and Catherine Newell for the prize of \$25 donated by the Bethel Savings Bank. The judges also selected Jo Stevens for honorable mention.

On Sunday, May 24, the 192nd birthday of Dr. Moses Mason was celebrated with great fanfare. A large cake made by Diane S. Howe graced the dining room and the doctor and his wife Agnes portrayed by Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Perkins greeted visitors to the house. Strawberry punch was served from the winter kitchen. Throughout the house and meeting room were artists and craftspersons, including Nell Valentine, quilting; Mem Enright, spinning; Agnes Haines and Cathy Newell, basketmaking; Sue Wight and Helen Morton, sketching. Piano music was provided for the occasion by Arlene Brown and Edna York. During the party everyone adjourned to the back lawn where Trustee Chairman Margaret Joy Tibbetts formally dedicated the summer house c. 1895 with Dr. & Mrs. Mason and the donors, Mr. & Mrs. Norris Brown looking on. Over two hundred attended this weekend affair.

BOOK REVIEW

Paula M. Wight's Newry Profiles 1805-1980 was planned and written in celebration of Newry's 175th year as a town. It follows by twenty-five years the publication of a brief history by her aunt, Carrie Wight, Newry, Maine 1805-1955, and by four years the publication of Sunday River Sketches, by Martha Fifield Wilkins, edited and published by Randy Bennett in 1977. The three books together provide a good deal of information for the reader interested in the history of Newry, indeed the history of rural Maine generally. Though sparse in population through most of its existence, Newry has had the advantage of a spectacular natural environment of water and mountains, field and forest, but also the difficulty of turning this land to human use and human livelihood.

For Newry Profiles, Paula Wight has gathered, studied, and used well quite an extensive group of sources — town records, newspapers, diaries, notes, materials from archives in Massachusetts and Maine. Her book enlarges on a select group of the subjects taken up by Carrie Wight in 1955. She has chosen these carefully, for general interest, and for their central significance in the life of the town.

She focuses first on the town's legal and institutional development. She cites the relevant documents and town records in detail, and provides a reproduction of Sarah Bostwick's 1796 grant from Massachusetts for the township that became Newry. She carries the story efficiently through settlement, incorporation, changes in town borders, later 19th century developments, the provision of modern services, and ends with the town on the brink of a new era, as exploitation of its natural situation comes to the fore in the development of recreational facilities and vacation homes.

The heading of her account of Newry's schools, "Support of Schools" indicates clearly the focus on official acts, expenditures and similar data. She has, of course, considerable and important recent history to record on this subject as well. It seems unusual to have her devote a full page to an explanation of School and Ministerial funds, but such a section testifies to the thoroughness in reviewing and reporting records that is characteristic of the entire book.

An account of the major actions of the town regarding roads and bridges is included, a section on cemeteries, and a full account of the occupations that have sustained the residents of the town. The section on occupations indicates clearly that Paula's interest is in what one might call an historical overview. The only miscalculation in her treatment seems to be that she supposes we will "get" her meaning with only occasional and laconic sentences pointing out the significance of the facts she cites. This doesn't always happen.

Concluding the text is a lengthy (39 page) section on the buildings of the town, past and present. Carrie Wight walked a step in this direction in the brief "Homesteads" section of her book, but Paula is much more systematic and informative. Lists of owners, the fate of buildings, their changing functions, additions made, barns down — many details are here, and it is an illuminating journey on which she takes us, road by road, house by house, through both river valleys. Paula notes in her preface to this section that it is incomplete, but even so, there is much more material here than has been previously compiled in one place on the subject, and it is welcome indeed. A generous number of pictures of buildings old and new, and pictures of Newry and its people are distributed through the book. Lists of town officers and teachers, and reproduction of maps and documents add to the value of the book as well.

The book is clearly and crisply printed, but one production fault is immediately evident: the pages are not numbered. And there are other minor flaws: there is no title page, or copyright page, or even a table of contents, not to mention an index. As it stands, however, Newry Profiles is a wonderfully detailed and finely textured compilation of facts and observations about the history of the town. Paula Wight has made an important contribution to the local history of Western Maine.

George R. Allen

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

New Life Members are:

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Pugliese, Bethel are retired.

Mr. & Mrs. James Yarnell, Upton, are retired. Mrs. Yarnell is the daughter of the Society's first president, Charles Heywood.

New sustaining members are Sadie Allen Brooks, South Daytona, Florida; Barbara Rich Adams, Lancaster, New Hampshire; Adaline S. Clough, Bethel; Mr. & Mrs. Edward B. Hitchcock, Bethel; Katherine Carter Johnston, Grass Valley California; L. Adeline Dexter, Bethel; Mr. & Mrs. Albert Smith, Cedar Falls, Iowa; Read H. Putham, Evanston, Wyoming; Walter W. Wright, Lebanon, New Hampshire; Barbara L. Wheeler, Bethel.

New contributing member is Lillian Kelly Bomhoff, Mendham, New Jersey.

New student member is William T. Rice, Bethel.

There are currently 437 members of the Society.

SOCIETY TO PRODUCE SPECIAL EDITION OF THE COURIER FOR INDIAN RAID BICENTENNIAL

A special edition of the Society's publication, "The Bethel Courier" will be available for sale in commemoration of the Indian Raid Bicentennial, August 1 and 2. It will contain articles about past Indian Raid observances, the Segar Narrative (the recollections of the event by one of the participants, Nathaniel Segar), several photographs of other Indian Raid commemorations as well as articles on Indians and Sudbury Canada at the time of the Raid. There will also be the official full program of events. A fine souvenir, the special edition will also be an opportunity to be remembered by posterity. For a minimum donation of ten dollars, the Society is offering anyone interested the privilege to become listed as a sponsor. Anyone interested in making such a contribution should notify the Society.

WIDE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES TO BE FEATURED DURING INDIAN RAID BICENTENNIAL

A wide variety of activities are planned to commemorate the bicentennial of the Indian Raid to be held August 1 and 2. Featured will be a large number of militia activities, heritage and children's parades, historical exhibits, canoe races, a horse show, community jam session, old fashioned bean suppers, a colonial church service, a marine flag pageant, flower show and of course the final event the pageant depicting the Raid itself. A special Indian Raid '81 stamp cancellation will also be available as well as a special edition of the Bethel Courier.

RUTH CROSBY (1897-1981)

Ruth Crosby had a life-long love affair with Bethel. Her attraction to the town resulted from the childhood pleasures which whimsically captured her while spending summers with her family at the Locke farm in North Bethel. Later these memories were allowed to develop to maturity when her parents bought a farm about one and a half miles further north in the Sunday River Valley. Her devotion to her family and the tranquility of summer residence at the Red House sustained her throughout her adult life. From diaries, letters, journals and photo albums, it is easy to see that although her taxes went to Newry, her heart belonged to Bethel.

Ruth had another love affair that nearly equalled that of her love of Bethel and that was books and reading — more specifically English literature and even more precisely, the writing and life of Geoffrey Chaucer. Her professional career in English literature led her eventually to Orono where she spent thirty three years in the English Department of the University of Maine. Her many associates, hundreds of students and numerous friends in Orono captivated her and she them, as strongly but differently, than at Bethel.

One of the highlights of her life was the opportunity to track down great names in the history of English writing on a trip to England with her mother in 1938. The trip provided more excitement than they bargained for, however, as they had to leave abruptly as war clouds darkened the horizon and all Americans were urgently warned to depart. Ruth was interviewed about her experience in a nation on the verge of war upon her return and later wrote a complete manuscript about her travels

She was an enlightened, emancipated woman in an age before than type of female independence was considered fashionable. After graduating from Arlington (Massachusetts) High School, she went to Mount Holyoke for her B.A. and to Radcliffe for her M.A. and Ph.D. While this background sustained her career in the English Department at UMO, her writing efforts outside her professional interests developed from her deep emotional attachment to her Locke farm memories and her family. In 1966, after years of writing, rewriting, reading and rereading, telling and retelling, she completed I Was A Summer Boarder about the Crosby family summers in Bethel, which quite unin-

tionally contributed to Bethel and Maine history by recording a case history of the summer vacation scene so prevalent from 1860 to 1930. In 1974, she finished a family history in three parts called From An Old Leather Trunk.

For years the actual old leather trunk has been stored in a workshop in the Red House in Sunday River. The old journals and family papers which Ruth found in it are still there, plus many of her own papers, family bible and the forty five year family history prepared by her mother. The trunk and its contents are definitely one of the most valuable bequests Ruth made to the surviving members of her family.

Donald G. Bennett

Editor's Note

Donald G. Bennett, vice president of the Society, is Miss Crosby's nephew and inherited the Red House from her.

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Catherine Newell, *President*

Donald G. Bennett, *Vice President*

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HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES

"Wilson Hammons has his new meat market nearly finished, which will add much to the social comforts of the place. A good market house is much needed, where everything one wishes can be found without running to every store to find different articles."

Oxford Advertiser, June 22, 1883

"Farm help is very scarce and wages high, good hands commanding \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day in hoeing. Hoeing will lap hard into haying this year."

Oxford Advertiser, July 6, 1883

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.
Membership in the Society entitles you to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) free admission to the museum | (5) quarterly newsletter |
| (2) special discounts at museum store | (6) reduced course fees |
| (3) preferred rate for meeting room rental | (7) voting rights in the Society |
| (4) special library and archival privileges | (8) special invitations to Society occasions |

(Please Print)

Name

Address

Signature

Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217

-----Sustaining \$2.50 (Individual)

-----Contributing \$10.00

-----Patron \$25.00

-----Students (under 18 years) \$1.00

-----Life over 55 years \$50.00 single

-----Life over 55 years \$75.00 couple

-----Life under 55 years \$100.00 single

-----Life under 55 years \$150.00 couple

"E. B. Goddard is just rushing his house and shop, and it will do much to make a comely appearance to the vacant lot that has been so long waiting for some energetic man to make a strike."

Oxford Advertiser, July 6, 1883

"Grover and Burnham's store was broken into Thursday night and some fifty dollars worth of clothing, boots, etc., taken. As near as they can tell, no other goods were disturbed, and the money drawer was not meddled with. They broke in from the front window by breaking the glass out. Five men were seen Thursday afternoon under the R. R. bridge, and one of them came down to one of the stores for crackers and cheese. These men were strangers and are supposed to be the guilty party, probably tramps."

Oxford Advertiser, July 6, 1883

"The large store of Messrs. Woodbury and Purington is nearly finished outside, and the priming coat of paint put on. The final painting will be of a light greenish shade and darker trimmings, and the roof fire-proof red color, presenting a grand appearance."

Oxford Advertiser, August 3, 1883

"Mr. Eli Barker is about to move his house and join it on to his father's where the shed now stands. This will make a fine establishment and very commodious — too much so we think for the prospects of his family."

Oxford Advertiser, August 3, 1883

"Our hotels are full to overflowing with tourists and so are all the private boarding places. Gay teams are constantly passing to and from all points of interest in this vicinity."

Oxford Advertiser, August 17, 1883

"Nearly a thousand acres of splendid meadow surround our village, and almost every man owns a few acres, which is a great blessing to the people, enabling almost everyone to keep a horse, a cow, or both, and some quite a stock, which otherwise would not be done."

Oxford Advertiser, August 17, 1883

"John Swan or 'Potato John' has his new two story house nearly situated on Railroad Street opposite his potato house and makes a very pretty appearance. Long may he wave."

Oxford Advertiser, September 14, 1883

"Mrs. William O. Straw while cleaning out her chamber this week came upon a pan of meal which she fed to their \$200 horse. The horse lived but a few hours, and she recollected soon after of placing the meal there for the rats — rough on horses."

Oxford Advertiser, November 9, 1883

"The Elm Hotel has been closed for a short time. The owners, Messrs. Grover and Burnham, are negotiating with parties to let the house be occupied as in the past as a hotel, which is much needed, more especially in the summer season to accommodate summer boarders. It has always enjoyed a liberal patronage from this source in the past as well as from the travelling public generally; and there is no reason why a party cannot meet with the same prosperity in the future, if they show their guests proper attention and treat all with politeness and due respect. May the proprietors soon have in a good, substantial lively, go-ahead man to run this house, as citizens do not want to see it remain closed as our village wants to present a lively appearance in everything."

Oxford Advertiser, January 25, 1884

Recipe for Sweet Cucumber Pickles from Mrs. A. W. Grover, published in a booklet, "Food for the Mind and Helps For the Body" Ladies Circle, Universalist Church, Bethel, Maine, 1905.

Cut and pare cucumbers and soak in vinegar twenty-four hours. Drain from this vinegar; put in a porcelain kettle one quart fresh vinegar, one pound sugar, one tablespoonful (heaped) mixed spices in a bag, add cucumbers and boil one half hour, or until you can pierce with straw. Then skim out cucumbers and boil syrup twenty minutes and pour over fruit.



The Bethel Historical Society
P.O. Box 12
Bethel, Maine 04217



Celebration
August 1 - 2, 1981

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